

## Breaking Bread like Jesus

This is what a community devoted to following Jesus looks like. They devote themselves to:

1. Apostles' teaching
2. Fellowship
3. Breaking bread
4. Prayer

There are three ways the New Testament completes the sentence, "The Son of Man came . . ."

- Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.
- Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost.
- Luke 7:34 The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'

"In Luke's Gospel Jesus is either going to a meal, at a meal, or coming from a meal." (Robert Karris, *Eating Your Way through Luke's Gospel*, 14)

For the church, the greatest demonstration of what eating and drinking like Jesus looks like is in one specific meal that goes by many names:

### BREAKING BREAD

In Jesus this common idiom takes on added significance.

*Now the Passover, a Jewish festival, was near...I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven so that anyone may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread he will live forever. The bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh. John 6:4, 47-51.*

**Question:** Do we eat with a sense that all the life and sustenance that we experience is due to one giving his own life?

### EUCCHARIST

εὐχαριστία means "thanksgiving."

*As they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take and eat it; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks, he gave it to them and said, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. Matthew 26:26-28 (also Mark 14:22-26, Luke 22:14-30)*

**Question:** Do we come to our tables literally giving thanks for God's provision? Is this thanksgiving sincere or has it become a dull exercise?

### LORD'S SUPPER

This meal traces the past, present and future unchanging faithful love of God in a memorial to the last supper of Jesus (1 Corinthians 11:20).

When the hour came, he reclined at the table, and the apostles with him. Then he said to them, "I have fervently desired to eat this **Passover** with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the **kingdom of God.**" Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks, he said, "Take this and share it among yourselves. For I tell you, from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine **until the kingdom of God comes.**" And he took bread, gave thanks, broke it, gave it to them, and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. **Do this in remembrance of me.**" In the same way he also took the cup after supper and said, "This cup is the **new covenant** in my blood, which is poured out for you. Luke 22:14-20

**Question:** When we eat and drink, do we consider how God has created eating and drinking to be a continual reminder, enjoyment of his steadfast, faithful love to us?

## LOVE FEAST

"Agapes" (Jude 1:12) were communal meals intended to promote love of one another by sharing.

**20** When you come together, then, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. **21** For at the meal, each one eats his own supper. So one person is hungry while another gets drunk! **22** Don't you have homes in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What should I say to you? Should I praise you? I do not praise you in this matter! **33** Therefore, my brothers and sisters, when you come together to eat, welcome one another. **34** If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you gather together you will not come under judgment. I will give instructions about the other matters whenever I come. (1 Corinthians 11:20-22; 33-34)

These meals were abused, love feasts without love.

The feasts were to be outposts of peace with everyone welcoming and waiting on one another.

**Question:** When you come to a shared meal do you come first to serve or be served?

## COMMUNION

The Latin translation of κοινωνία meaning fellowship, sharing, participation

**16** The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a **sharing** in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a **sharing** in the body of Christ? **17** Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, since all of us share the one bread. **24** No one is to seek his own good, but the good of the other person. **31** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, 24, 31

This meal is an intensification of our unity within the body of Christ. It is a sign of our unity and it is a means of coming to that unity.

**Questions:** Do you have something against a brother and sister? Do you feel urgency to reconcile, to seek to share peace? Does the unconstrained forgiveness of Jesus to you cause you to consider withholding forgiveness to one another unthinkable?

## MASS

"Ite, Missa est" (Go, it is dismissed)

"If you have received this well, you are what you have received." Augustine (4th century)

**1** Before the Passover Festival, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. **3** Jesus knew that the Father had given everything into his hands, that he had come from God, and that he was going back to God. **4** So he got up from supper, laid aside his outer clothing, took a towel, and tied it around himself. **5** Next, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet and to dry them with the towel tied around him. **12** When Jesus had washed their feet and put on his outer clothing, he reclined again and said to them, "Do you know what I have done for you? **13** You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are speaking rightly, since that is what I am. **14** So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. **15** For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done for you. **34** "I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another. **35** By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:1-35

**Question:** Does your table look like this? Is this meal changing you?

Allow this meal to transform all relationships and every meal. A meal that welcomes strangers, renders them neighbors, and invites them to be family.